

In Memoriam
Horst Hutter, 1938-2023



Among the many great teachers who have blessed my life, Horst Hutter was the greatest. That is saying something – I truly have been blessed with amazing teachers throughout my life, including many at Concordia. Horst was also my mentor, my dear friend, and godfather to my son.

When I walked into my first class with Horst in 2006, it changed my life. My many fellow students who took his (always full) classes for credit, and then returned to sit in on them again for years afterward, attest to the same experience of him: a generous, demanding, inspiring thinker attuned both to his own heart and to the thoughtful works of philosophical forebears, intimately familiar with the cartography of the soul.

An unparalleled mind, Horst was also consummately humble. He was “flawed and aware of it”, to borrow the poet Czesław Miłosz’s words, and showed his students that accepting flaws and imperfections in oneself is fundamental to working on them – is fundamental to philosophy as a way of life.

Horst was, as he often said, “born in exile” on February 23, 1938, and grew up in Graz, Austria. He graduated from Styria’s Teacher’s Institute in 1957 and was a schoolteacher for several years thereafter. He then received a Fulbright scholarship to attend Hunter College, where he earned his M.A., and completed his Ph.D. at Stanford with a brilliant dissertation on the politics of friendship in Greek and Roman antiquity. He would later revise and publish this as his first book, *Politics as Friendship* (1978), in which he incisively illustrated the fundamental importance of genuine individual friendships – and of the capacity to be and to have a genuine friend – to the very emergence of political community in ancient Greece.

In 1973, Horst was recruited to the Department of Political Science at Sir George Williams University, now Concordia's downtown campus. Soon after, on a yearly trip to Yelapa in Mexico, Horst met the poet and artist Francine Prévost, with whom he would spend the rest of his life. They married and had two sons, the filmmaker Harald Hutter and actor Florian Hutter, dividing their time between Montréal and Leigné-sur-Usseau in France.

Horst taught at SGW and then Concordia for 38 years before retiring as full professor in 2011. One of the greatest scholars of Plato and Nietzsche of his time, in 2006 he published his now-landmark study of *askesis* in Nietzsche's work, *Shaping the Future: Nietzsche's New Regime of the Soul and Its Ascetic Practices*. Retrieving and reviving Nietzsche's keen provocations toward soul-care and careful self-shaping, Horst's book has inspired a generation of students and generated a wholesale reconsideration of the quandary of ascetic practices that is at the core of Nietzsche's work (and Plato's). I later had the great pleasure of co-editing, with Horst, a collection of contributions from some of the most insightful Nietzsche scholars around the world on a core theme that emerged from that book, philosophy as therapy. We published *Nietzsche's Therapeutic Teaching* together in 2013. It was the privilege of a lifetime.

In honour of his outstanding career as an educator and scholar, Horst Hutter was named Distinguished Professor Emeritus in 2015.

After Horst's retirement, Francine and Horst founded the Maison Gai Saber in Leigné-sur-Usseau, a unique retreat and gathering place for a broad diversity of artists and lovers of philosophy, inspired by the troubadour tradition in the south of France. In the last years of his life, Horst was a grandfather – something he had dreamed of being – to Léon, Florian and his partner Clio's bright and beautiful son.

Horst Hutter died in Leigné-sur-Usseau on May 22, 2023.

May his memory be a blessing for us.

Eli Friedland
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